

**Literacy Development of Young Learners through the Use of Multimedia
at Elementary School**

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ABSTRACT

The research aims at (1) studying exploratively a multimedia based learning as an acceleration of literacy introduction at elementary school; (2) providing relevant and compatible learning resources in thematic learning activities; and (3) giving a literacy evaluation towards the thematic learning done at elementary school.

The study uses a research and development method (R & D). The development is conducted to promote literacy enrichment in a thematic learning. The instruments of the research are observation, interview, field study and test. The data analysis is done by using interactive analytical technique which consists of three components, those are: data reduction, data presentation and inference or verification. The quantitative data analysis uses statistics to find out the result of the development process and literacy learning evaluation in the multimedia based learning.

The research result shows that (1) multimedia based learning can be used as an alternative way of accelerating the introduction of literacy towards students in elementary school; (2) the learning resources related to literacy can be applied in the thematic learning; and (3) literacy evaluation is important to be done in a thematic learning at elementary school.

Keywords: development, literacy of young learners, multimedia and elementary school.

INTRODUCTION

Thematic learning pattern has been applied in elementary school in Indonesia which is based on curriculum 2013. It means that in one session of learning, a teacher can completely do his/her planned thematic learning. In this case, it is important to design a lesson plan which includes a learning strategy which encourages students to be the main actor in the learning process. Teacher's professionalism in designing a good learning strategy should be supported by the teacher's ability to develop interesting, innovative, simple and applicable learning technology. The use of learning media is often considered as being closely related to the appropriate learning technology.

According to Trianto (2011: 231), there are some principles which need to be considered in choosing learning media, i.e. 1) there should be a clear objective of selecting the media which means, for example: is it for individual or group learning? Is it for young learners or adult learners, and so on; 2) "closeness" to the media, which means a teacher should be familiar with the features and characteristics of the media; and 3) There should be variously comparable multimedia so as to provide some alternatives for teacher to choose which media is best to be used in the learning process in line with the learning objective.

Learning media is actually not a new phenomenon. It had been widely discussed long before curriculum 2013. However, the use of learning media had not been strongly emphasized. In fact, the function and benefit of media which is adjusted to the learning material will make the learning process more interesting to students. Multimedia is an alternative and appropriate learning media for elementary school students. It is an alternative for a learning acceleration.

In curriculum 2013, the thematic material is integratedly designed of various contents and it should be completely finished in a session of learning. This is the focus and it makes the language communication cannot be well exposed. Language which previously stood alone has become a less noticed subject in terms of its function and usefulness. In fact, language can be introduced to students at the time of thematic learning and other subjects are taught. Direct communication which includes language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing can be introduced to students with the use of instructional media. The multimedia used in this study is audiovisual media of animated films. This selection of the animated film media is determined to draw attention of students to the use of language.

Kridalaksana (2001: 5) states that letters of alphabet (script) is a system of graphic signs used by humans to communicate, and which to a certain extent represents utterances. Meanwhile, literacy can actually be interpreted as writing words, sentences, or paragraphs. Literacy can be introduced through listening to an event, reading a story, and questioning-answering. The importance of knowing the various aspects of literacy is that it can enhance one's ability in the field of writing, absorb, and understand a wide range of learning resources. For elementary school students, literacy is the first step in learning to develop themselves and get to know different cultures and surroundings.

The difference between learning process in elementary school, secondary school and high school is on the individuals or subjects of the learning. They are different in understanding, mindset, and attitude. Young learners tend to have short term of concentration. They need to have a learning environment which can make them interested and get involved in the learning process. Therefore, learning process should present fun and joyful classroom activities and one of the ways is by conducting a learning activity which is supported by multimedia.

Based on the above explanation, the researchers do a research with the title, "Literacy Development of Young Learners through the Use of Multimedia at Elementary School". It is hoped that the research result will be one of the alternative solution for the improvement of learning strategy for young learners.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research uses Research and Development (R & D) method which tries to develop or produce certain learning product and examining the effectiveness of the product as suggested by Sugiyono (2011: 407). The research product is expected to bring about a common understanding about a multimedia based learning process without excluding the local culture and indigeousness as the local identity. The technique of analysis used in the research is interactive analysis which developed by Mile dan

Huberman (in Sutopo, 2006: 94). This technique of interactive analysis consists of three analytical components; those are data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The quantitative data is statistically analysed to examine the success of multimedia based learning development and literacy learning evaluation.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Multimedia Based Learning as an alternative way to accelerate the introduction to literacy at elementary school

Multimedia based learning is not a learning omitting traditional aspect while promoting science and technology but it is a learning which considers promoting the aspects of science and technology and local culture in a balanced portion. Combining those aspects helps accelerating the introduction of literacy to children or young learners of elementary school.

1. Multimedia Based Learning

The significance of conducting multimedia based learning can be seen from the finding that the elementary school students seem to be more enthusiastic in taking part in the multimedia based learning rather than those in the conventional learning model of presentation. Students give passive response to the lesson orally explained by the teachers without any supporting learning media. It shows that technology gives a positive impact (benefit) towards education. The use of multimedia has been rarely found in elementary school learning process in Kudus area, especially in rural area. Based on a field study, there is only 40 % found in the subdistrict of Dawe Kudus (as the research subject) of the schools which use multimedia to support learning process at elementary school. The rest (60%) of them is found to be still using traditional (conventional) way of learning, i.e. depending on the teacher as the learning resource. Teacher centered learning is a way of teaching which needs to be considered being avoided since it causes passive participation from students. Meanwhile, student centered learning approach tends to be able to encourage student's participation in the class. To conduct a student centered learning, it needs a supporting classroom environment. The use of multimedia can be an alternative way for doing so and it needs to be promoted among teachers in the subdistrict of Dawe, Kudus, since many elementary schools in this area have not practiced it. The schools which have done it are those which have complete learning facilities.

Some schools in Dawe have applied multimedia in their learning process but the applied multimedia is still limited to one product of learning or it has not yet been integrated to the other subjects. Multimedia of animation film has also been applied in some elementary schools in Dawe but it still needs developing, especially, in terms of its content which needs to be broadened to some other integrated subjects.

2. Stages of Accelerating Multilingual Literacy Learning

Some stages are used to do acceleration on literacy through the use of multimedia learning in elementary school. In this research there are three stages underlying the use of

multimedia to accelerate the introduction to multilingual literacy to students, i.e. through picture (visual), story (audio), and animation film (audio-visual)

a. Picture (Visual)

Picture is one of media which can be used to introduce students to lingual literacy, such as understanding verbs and imperatives related to daily activities. Events in daily activities can be integrated with pictures to be presented in the class. The strong point (benefit) of using picture in learning process is that it can bring the context of real life into classroom so that students will feel like in a real situation. When picture is presented it can also help students understand the given material. Words and sentences will be more easily understood if they are integrated with picture. Some of the multilingual literacy learning materials that can be supported by picture are such as greetings, telling about time, classroom environment, social environment, respecting people and tolerance. It is an example of integrating learning themes, multilingual literacy and the use of picture as learning media.

Based on the field study of the research about the use of picture as a visual media, it is proven to have a strong point as mentioned above and a weak point. The weak point is that picture is not a living thing so a teacher needs to communicate the used picture to students to support the discussion on the related learning materials. The teacher should be able to show the correlation between the used picture and the context of the learning material. In this case, it is highly recommended that teacher have a good understanding about the picture so that the learning process can be interesting. Besides, there should be a guidance book for teacher to use the picture. This will help teacher presenting for the students any events related to the picture. Picture can also be beneficial to make a visualization of the symbol represented by the language elements.

b. Story (Audio)

Telling a story is a method frequently used by teachers to tell stories or past events to amuse or entertain students. A story can be fiction or non fiction. This method conditions students to do listening activity which tend to be one way communication and this will need students' concentration so as to avoid misunderstanding or missing parts of the story. Telling a story is generally used by teachers to tell legends, folktales or any real (non fiction) past events directly to students. Telling story method allows teachers to give questions or give chance to students to ask questions about the story.

This method is not much different from the use of audio or recorded sound containing certain materials. The use of recorded sound will be optimally done if it is supported with compatible facilities of sound system device, school environment as well as the interior design of classroom. In this point, clarity of sound is highly needed. Technical or physical problems of the sound system installation or device will make the listening activity of students not optimally done or even disturbed. Classroom environment including the school location also needs considering to apply the telling story method. Based on the research result, it is found in the field that some schools in

Dawe territory have used audio as media of telling stories to have the students do listening activities to understand recorded learning materials.

c. Animation Film (Audiovisual)

Animation film is a film whose characters are played not by human but by cartoon characterizing as human, animal or other living things. Cartoon is usually designed with interesting, funny and imaginative features. Animation film is appropriate to be used as a learning media for elementary school students since this audiovisual media display colourful and eye-catching moving picture supported by audio which making the picture seems more alive like the real one. The research has found that teachers have interest in using animation film as one of beneficial learning media as long as it contains stories which are related to the learning materials.

Animation Film as a Learning resource in a Thematic Learning to Improve Literacy

This research is done to complete and improve the existing learning media. Mostly, the existing learning media of animation film still present thematic learning bilingually, i.e. by using *bahasa Indonesia* and Javanese. This research describes how thematic learning is done by stimulating students' literacy multilingually, i.e. by using English, *bahasa Indonesia* and Javanese. Students are exposed with multilingual skill practice (in the level of vocabulary mastery) to talk about certain topics with meaningful context. The resecearch has found one alternative learning resource. Form of the learning resource which is concerned in this research is animation film which contains integrated materials used in a thematic multilingual learning. The thematic multilingual learning is, in this case, a learning activity which allows students to study about the materials given by teachers and making efforts to resond the materials in multilingual practice of English, Indonesian, Javanese and even Korean. This learning resource is a form of the use of animation film to accelerate students' understanding of the given material multilingually. The animation film is a combination between audio and visual functioning to give information and visualize the information through animation delivered multilingually. The multilingual aspect emphasized in this learning model is that the students are mostly exposed to the use of verbs since it is the main element of sentence. As language is the basic part of literacy, it should be practiced by students in all skills.

Literacy Evaluation of Thematic Learning at Elementar Schools

The students' understanding of literacy in thematic learning at elementary school should be measured and assessed to know how language has been mastered by students. Evaluation is needed to measure the level of students' achievement and to prove whether the learning process is successfully done. The evaluation stages conducted in the research are 1.) Giving chance to students to retell the material they have learned multilingually; 2.) making a guessing quiz; 3.) Asking the students to write some vocabularies and sentences related to the material in meaningful contex; and 4.) providing pictures, sound recordings, animation film which present some questions.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Involving students to participate actively in learning activities can be done by conducting interesting and fun learning. One of the alternative ways is by conducting a thematic learning supported by the use of multimedia. Thematic learning is effective to have a student centered learning since students are engaged in a contextual learning environment. This thematic learning is more easily done if it is supported by the use of multimedia like animation film. Students' multilingual potential can also be developed in this thematic learning process. When students are encouraged to actively take part in learning activities in the classroom they will naturally improve their literacy since they will actively be involved in contextual communication in the classroom.

Information and communication technology (ICT) needs to be developed for making a student centered learning model a success. This technology has been proven to be beneficial for learning activities. Therefore, teachers are recommended to creatively support their teaching and learning activities by using multimedia. Animation film is one of the ICT's products which can be developed for doing so. The content of animation film should involve the students' contextual life and culture so that they will feel at home when discussing learning materials. Various stories which are based on the local culture or value should be creatively instilled in the content of animation film.

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